

CHAPTER 8

PLAN OF CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT



PARKS & RECREATION

Overview

This chapter reviews two interrelated issues—Parks and Recreation. The 1995 Town Plan of Development and the 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan both provided a number of recommendations for short and long-range projected improvements. The Town has made strides since the adoption of these Plans in significantly improving its parks and recreation facilities. These include: modifications and improvements to Baker Field; the acquisition of property and construction of a new fieldhouse, ballfield and playground at McGuane Field; acquisition of property adjacent to Woodland Park; irrigation of a number of fields within the community; improvements to Cherry Lawn Park; and enhanced parking at Stony Brook Park.

This Plan focuses on improvements and enhancements of the Town's existing facilities, and properties, including those used for active recreation, those used for passive recreation, and those preserved as natural open spaces. This chapter will outline and describe policies related to parks, recreation and open space, and conclude with a list of recommendations. Appendix A8 explains the issues related to many of the existing parks and recreation facilities within the community, and provides tables and maps showing existing open space within Town owned by various entities.

Policies

To increase water-based recreation opportunities.

To protect Darien's waterfront resources.

To maximize existing park and recreation facilities.

To continue the high level of maintenance and enhancements at all parks.

To continue to use public-private partnerships, where appropriate, to provide recreation facilities for the community.

To preserve as much land as possible for parks, recreation and natural open space to maintain Darien's high quality of life.

Recommendations

Update the 1996 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan to reflect the changing needs and desires of the community.

Complete the Weed Beach Master Plan that would review, analyze, and prepare an efficient layout for that area.

Consider purchasing the lot(s) on Short Lane to allow for the expansion of Weed Beach.

Examine all opportunities to preserve land for public recreation and open space.

Consider purchasing properties contiguous to Town-owned properties if they become available.

Prepare a Master Plan for all Town Park properties (Tilley Pond Park, Cherry Lawn, Woodland Park, Pear Tree Point, Selleck's Woods, Baker Field).

Where appropriate, encourage "Friends of" groups to take an active role in park planning. This has worked effectively over the past few years.